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Republican House Says to Seniors, Small Businesses, Middle Class Families: "Take a Hike"

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) today released the following statement regarding the nearly party-line vote against helping seniors who are facing a second year without a cost of living increase in their Social Security benefits. House Republicans blocked the bill, which would have provided a one-time \$250 payment to help seniors make ends meet in the absence of the cost of living increase they usually receive.

"The incoming Congress has made it abundantly clear that they are only interested in helping millionaires and billionaires. To the rest of America - the hard-working middle class who are struggling to pay their bills, the small businesses fighting to stay afloat, the millions of seniors who can't afford food or medicine - they're saying: 'take a hike.'

"This summer, I visited dozens of senior centers throughout the region. Wherever I went, I heard from seniors who were really feeling the absence of that cost of living adjustment. Food, medicine - all of those prices have gone up. But the amount of money seniors have to pay for them has stayed the same.

"It is absolutely appalling that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would dig their heels in and demand tax giveaways for the richest people in this country but turn their backs on the people who really do need help. Appalling."

Late last month, Congressional Republicans blocked a measure that would have extended unemployment insurance, leaving 45,000 unemployed Missourians out in the cold. Last week, House Republicans voted against extending tax cuts for middle class families unless the tax breaks were also extended for the wealthiest 3 percent - a step that would do nothing to help get people back to work and would add tens of billions of dollars to the deficit.

Carnahan has vigorously pushed for help for Missouri seniors, urging passage of the one-time payment and sponsoring legislation that would provide a permanent fix to the formula flaw that resulted in seniors being denied a Social Security cost of living increase.

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